

THE TRAFFIC REPORT



From the Director's Desk: 2011 Achievements

The year 2011 has been a time of contrasts—with many new challenges, but also one of the most hopeful times I can remember.

Attention to wildlife crime is increasingly being elevated to higher political levels through a number of potentially powerful initiatives such as the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) and INTERPOL's Project Predator. There are some strong developments in regional enforcement networking in South Asia and Central America. There is a growing recognition that wildlife trade is a driver of positive and negative impacts for wildlife conservation and that the significance of the impacts cannot be ignored.

Our team in North and Central America has had some major successes that have helped to bolster our own impacts. The establishment and evolution of ROAVIS, the Central American Wildlife Enforcement Network, is a testament to a strong public and civil society sector initiative to get some concerted cooperation and shared learning behind mitigation of wildlife crime in the region. You can learn more about ROAVIS partners and progress in this e-newsletter.

Major resource use and trade in forest and marine products such as timber and fish are in the limelight more than ever. Resources are threatened by illegal, unregulated and unreported harvest and trade. This is undermining sound sustainable management and equitable sharing of natural resources, right down to the community level.

At TRAFFIC, we have developed a series of strategic approaches, projects, and investigations into these challenges. We have made progress toward raising funds for projects that will develop long-term solutions, like keeping illegally sourced products out of supply chains that reach into the region. Some insights into recent developments are explored in these pages.

Regarding marine issues, we have just completed an analysis of the import of ornamental species from coral reefs into the United States. This will help us understand the trade dynamics and the role the U.S. plays in this often opaque harvest from reefs across the globe.

The E-newsletter of TRAFFIC North America



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TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network

is a joint programme of



Produced with the

In 2011, our wildlife specimen identification gurus at TRAFFIC Canada published an incredible and enormous identification guide to precious corals in trade. This will be a definitive resource for government agencies, conservation groups, academia and others. It is available on request—and free of charge—to any relevant institution.

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The sheer volume of illicit wildlife commodities being smuggled from Africa to Asia underscores the need for strong enforcement and new solutions that reduce demand for endangered species. Urgent steps are being taken to position quick fixes, backed by long-term strategies. TRAFFIC facilitated bilateral exchange missions between countries like South Africa and Vietnam, and led a global rhino horn trafficking crisis workshop this year. The TRAFFIC International Demand Reduction Experts Workshop is an example of a new initiative that seeks ways to impact demand in Asia.

While there are many challenges ahead, joint-effort initiatives are reaching the highest levels of political attention and are really paying off. TRAFFIC is part of the global community doing this work, and we continue to seek new partners and new ways to mitigate the threats to wildlife from illicit and unsustainable trade. Please consider joining this mission by collaborating with us in some way.

Contribution by Crawford Allan, Regional Director, TRAFFIC North America

International Consortium Breaks New Ground

There have been successes in tackling wildlife crime at national and regional levels, but a global approach has never been tried—until now.

The International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) is a collaborative effort by five key intergovernmental organizations responsible for enforcement, wildlife trade and development internationally. The consortium will support the wildlife law enforcement community in apprehending perpetrators of wildlife crime and bringing them to justice. ICWC seeks to support development of law enforcement efforts without being detrimental to the livelihoods of poor and marginalized rural communities.

The ICWC partners are INTERPOL, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the World Bank, the World Customs Organization (WCO), and the CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) Secretariat, which chairs the alliance. There has never been a more visible attempt to take wildlife crime seriously at the global level. ICWC has helped to push the issue up the agenda of a number of international fora and has started major initiatives like Project Predator, an international operation to tackle illegal trade in Asian big cats.

Resolutions by INTERPOL and UNODC are also testament to the organizations themselves taking the stand that wildlife crime, while not the traditional arena of law enforcement, is an important threat to address. There is now significant understanding that wildlife crime has broader impacts and links—including to organized crime—than had been previously thought.
(See <http://www.cites.org/eng/prog/icwc.shtml>)

Contribution by Crawford Allan, TRAFFIC North America, November 2011

Roaring Forward from the Tiger Summit

During 2010, the Year of the Tiger in the Chinese lunar calendar, tiger range countries took action, individually and collectively, for the continued survival and recovery of the species in the wild.

The tiger summit in Russia marked a pivotal moment in tiger conservation and changed the political landscape. The Global Tiger Recovery Programme was adopted and a Leaders' Declaration committed us all to doubling the wild tiger population by 2022, the next Year of the Tiger.

The Year of the Tiger was a year of action. The South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) was established and the Parties to CITES agreed to strengthen CITES Resolution 12.5 on



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conservation of and trade in tigers.

All tiger range countries made major strides in tiger conservation. Bhutan established a tiger conservation fund to compensate owners for livestock killed by tigers. Cambodia formally designated Seima Protected Forest. India and China agreed to share information on wildlife crime, especially illegal trade in tigers and their derivatives. India also declared Sahyadri as the 39th tiger reserve, doubled the daily allowances of all field staff working in tiger reserves, and launched an online tiger mortality and seizures database called TigerNet. Malaysia

passed a new Wildlife Conservation Bill which provides significantly higher penalties and mandatory jail terms for wildlife crime. In Myanmar the Hukaung Valley Tiger Reserve was extended to 17,477 km². Nepal established Banke National Park and a National Tiger Conservation Committee under the leadership of the prime minister. Russia added Korean pine, a tree critical to the habitat of the Amur tiger, to the list of trees which cannot be logged. Vietnam established an Inter-agency Committee for Wildlife Trade Control.

The 13 tiger range countries have continued to meet and are developing a monitoring system for the implementation of the Global Tiger Recovery Program. Each country has a National Tiger Recovery Program. In March 2012, they will meet to evaluate progress made in the year after the summit.

Contribution by Barney Long, Asian Species Manager, Species Conservation, WWF-US

TRAFFIC NA Publishes Guide to Corals in Trade

After three years of research and production, TRAFFIC North America-Canada published the *Guide to the Identification of Precious and Semi-precious Corals in Commercial Trade*. It is the most comprehensive reference currently available on this topic.

This guide is focused specifically on those taxa that are commonly found in commercial trade, and therefore comprise the great majority of precious and semi-precious corals available.

The skeleton of almost any hard coral could be made into beads, jewelry and similar products. Products made from precious and semi-precious corals command high prices and near-global market demand. As a result, their trade is extensive and profitable, and provides ample incentive for their harvest.



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Unfortunately, most of these coral species have life-history characteristics that make them particularly vulnerable to overexploitation: extreme longevity, late age of maturity, slow growth and low fecundity. In some cases, discovery of commercially viable coral beds has led to rapid overexploitation. In addition, the use of destructive bottom trawls and dredges to harvest corals in some regions not only removes the corals—which provide critical habitat for sessile invertebrates—but also damages bottom features and destroys the bottom-dwelling organisms in their paths.

The international scope of the trade in corals requires that countries manage and enforce trade regulations, and international agreements such as CITES, concerning these species. Although many coral species are protected by CITES, the ability of the Parties to regulate their trade has been limited by the lack of resources designed to identify CITES-listed corals. The *Guide to the Identification of Precious and Semi-precious Corals in Commercial Trade* should fill this knowledge gap, enabling better enforcement of regulations.

The development and production of this publication was made possible thanks to generous funding from the Kingfisher Foundation, the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program, The Ocean Foundation, Vale Inco and WWF-Canada. The guide is available in English, French and Spanish and will soon be

available for free download from TRAFFIC websites. Printed copies in English are available on request from Ernie Cooper of TRAFFIC North America (ecooper@wwfcanada.org).

Contribution by Ernie Cooper, TRAFFIC North America, December 2011

Workshop Addresses Pressures on Pacific Sharks

In December 2011, TRAFFIC North America in Canada hosted a three-day workshop on the management and conservation of Pacific sharks. The focus was on Canada, but the discussions were broader and covered the subject on the entire West Coast of North America. The workshop brought together relevant stakeholders, including Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), fishers and representatives of fishing associations, environmental NGOs, academics, and shark specialists from Mexico, California, Oregon, Washington, British Columbia and Alaska.



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They came to discuss the most pressing issues for sharks in Pacific Canada. Attendees considered three overarching categories: science, policy/management and on-the-water practice. The goal was to produce a list of the most important issues, gaps and/or questions within these categories, as well as cross-cutting topics related to shark conservation and management on the Pacific coast. Participants also discussed next steps and decided to create an informal West Coast shark group that will meet every two years to keep the collaboration

moving.

Proceedings of the workshop will be available by April 2012 and will include the priorities for actions to be taken to ensure the conservation of Pacific sharks. This workshop was generously funded by the Canadian federal government's Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk.

Contribution by Ernie Cooper, TRAFFIC North America, December 2011

TRAFFIC Runs Training Courses in Costa Rica

A pilot course on CITES and a "train the trainer" course were held in close coordination with Universidad de Cooperación Internacional (UCI) in Costa Rica in early September. TRAFFIC convened some of the best national, regional and international experts to teach the curriculum, which was developed based on identified priorities, existing resources, and previous related experiences in the region. Twenty-six participants from an array of institutions responsible for CITES implementation in five CAFTA DR (Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement) countries participated.



Sessions during the five days of these two events covered

- international legal frameworks and wildlife trade-related agreements, with a strong focus on CITES as an international instrument for regulating trade
- practical methods for species identification and handling
- the use of existing tools (databases, experts directories, identification guides, manuals, interactive training courses) for improved CITES implementation and capacities strengthening
- sharing experiences with interagency cooperation to combat illegal use and trade of wildlife
- a trainers module on didactics and in-house training design

The training explored the potential of a modular, semi-virtual training course with a comprehensive curriculum. The course will be offered to CITES management authorities, scientific authorities and enforcement officials, as well as other interested groups in the Central American and Caribbean

countries.

These events, supported by U.S. Department of State under the CAFTA DR cooperation framework, were successful. Participants followed up by sharing the materials provided and instruction received with colleagues and institutions in their home countries.

Contribution by Adrian Reuter, TRAFFIC North America, November 2011

ROAVIS Officially Begins Its Work in Wildlife Enforcement

The Central American and Dominican Republic Wildlife Enforcement Network (ROAVIS) held its first official meeting in San Salvador, El Salvador, September 26-27. One of the most important outcomes of this meeting was the identification of key actors and priorities for ROAVIS, as well as the identification of existing and needed mechanisms to strengthen this network and guarantee its future effectiveness.



Participants were selected from four key agencies in each country: police, customs, prosecutors and CITES management authorities. Attending were 46 delegates representing eight countries, including all parties to the CAFTA DR plus Belize and Panama. The event was inaugurated by Hernán Rosa, Minister of the Environment in El Salvador and President of Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD), and Mitchel Fergusson, Economic Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in San Salvador.

Following the ROAVIS meeting, the first training to strengthen wildlife-related law enforcement under the ROAVIS framework took place September 28-30. Police, customs officials, prosecutors and other enforcement authorities from all the Central American countries and the Dominican Republic received training on priority topics including current wildlife markets and trends in the region; the threat of unsustainable and illegal practices; practical aspects of identification and handling of specimens; evidence, investigations, and intelligence; and existing tools and instruments that can support their efforts to combat wildlife crime.

The training provided comprehensive materials to promote further capacity-building efforts by the attendees in their home institutions, and participants committed to follow-up actions.

Both events were organized by TRAFFIC in coordination with U.S. Department of Interior and with the support of the U.S. Department of State under the CAFTA DR cooperation framework. Also collaborating were experts from recognized institutions such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Interpol, the Central American Environmental Prosecutors Network, UNAM and TRAFFIC.

Contribution by Adrian Reuter, TRAFFIC North America, November 2011

“Train the Trainer” Modules Welcomed

TRAFFIC developed eight “train the trainer” modules on wildlife trade-related topics identified as priorities in the Central American countries and the Dominican Republic. The eight topics are overview of wildlife trade, cycads, reptile handling, reptile skin identification, Psittacine handling, marine turtles, bio-safety and ivory identification.

The format will provide users with all the materials necessary to train their colleagues and others connected to these topics, including the high rotation of new government staff in the region who are assigned to work on wildlife trade-related issues. The modules are being distributed to the CITES management authorities from each CAFTA-DR country.

TRAFFIC has received extremely positive feedback about these materials. Users have found them easy to implement and practical in their daily activities. Central American countries have expressed

commitment using the modules to train more personnel in their own countries.

Contribution by Paola Mosig, TRAFFIC North America, November 2011

Defining 'Legal' Timber: The US Lacey Act and the European Timber Regulation

What is legal timber? Which laws need to apply and be complied with to determine whether timber traded is in compliance with local, national or international regulations and legislation? These are fairly simple questions, but the answers can be quite complex and open to interpretation. The European Union (E.U.) and the United States have taken slightly different approaches to defining legality and ensuring that their markets are kept clear of illegally sourced timber.



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In 1997, the G8 decided on an action program for forests, including a statement that there is a global illegal logging problem, with many governments acknowledging that there are significant volumes of illegal timber in their domestic trade markets. While the problem is linked to broader issues such as bad governance, unequal markets, marginalized people living in forests, forest degradation and loss of biodiversity, the global debate on best solutions for forest protection has increasingly focused on what needs to be done to combat illegal timber. In response, it is interesting to compare the approaches being developed in the main global consumer markets of the U.S. and the E.U.

The E.U. based its initial efforts upon a G8 Resolution of 2003 on forest protection and formulated the EU strategic response called the "Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) action plan." In the E.U., the two most relevant elements to the approach were supporting exporting countries in efforts to control illegal timber—including a licensing system for legal timber exported to the E.U.—and developing a European regulation to prohibit illegal timber. In 2010, Europe adopted such a regulation.

The U.S. had taken measures to tackle illegal logging over decades but lacked the legal basis to effectively control illegal timber reaching its domestic market. A major lobbying push initiated in 2005 saw a process evolve driven by concerns from industry and civil society groups due to domestic market and conservation impacts of illegal timber trade. The U.S. passed an amendment to the Lacey Act in 2008 to ban imports of illegal timber and plants and establish import declaration protocols.

The intention of the E.U. timber regulation was similar to the amended U.S. Lacey Act and they have two fundamental common approaches: It is a crime to trade illegal timber, and traders have to exercise due care to avoid and reject illegal timber in their supply chain. This leads to the basic requirements that in order to import to the U.S. and E.U. traders now have to know where timber products originated, what species they are made of, and the volume of each species in the shipment. These due-care requirements have led to the establishment of a timber importation practice: Importers and buyers must know the origin of the raw material and establish basic traceability of timber products through the supply chain.

However, the application of these regulatory mechanisms is not yet complete; many rules and procedures are still being developed, and they are being applied in a gradual way so as not to overwhelm the industry. For example, the declaration requirements for a range of timber products have not yet been defined under the U.S. Lacey Act amendment.

It is important to note that it is not yet clear what the definition of legal timber is for each country of export, as "legal" relates to a series of related laws, regulations and ordinances that vary from country to country, and from state level to local level in some cases. There needs to be a formal selection of which laws are applicable in each major timber-exporting country so that importers and law enforcement can really understand whether the products imported are of legal origin.

TRAFFIC and the WWF Global Forest & Trade Network (GFTN) have developed and tested a method to undertake this selection process for countries. The method will inform due-care efforts for the industry and importers/buyers, but also for law enforcement agencies of the U.S. and the E.U. Case study examples are available and the method is now being applied through cases studies of a new set of countries.¹

¹ Common framework to assess legal timber, see <http://gftn.panda.org/?193890/Exporting-in-a-Shifting-Legal-Landscape>

Contribution by Ulrich Malessa, TRAFFIC North America

Status Update on Timber & Fisheries

Timber and fish are globally traded, high-volume commodities taken from natural systems. The impact of this trade on ecosystem integrity and biodiversity cannot be underestimated. For marine ecosystems, the U.S.-EU Joint Statement to Combat IUU Fishing (see following article) points in the right direction for the conservation of this natural resource: collaborating to help those who supply responsible fish and squeezing out those who are involved in illegal fishing.



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There remains a long way to go from lofty words on paper to actual enforcement and shutting down markets for illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fish. But the agreement is an important step in having a global impact on marine conservation. And might this commitment also be an inspiring example for preventing the illicit supply on the timber market?

Globally, the EU and the U.S. combined are the largest market for products made out of timber. Challenges arise as emerging markets demand more supply from international markets and also consume more of the timber and fish domestically. Future initiatives will need to take into account these trends as they work to insure responsible and sustainable production of fish and timber. Policy makers will need to consider whether future activities on timber or the current collaboration on fisheries will squeeze the operating space for illegal actors, or simply shift the illegal supply to less sensitive markets. If this question is not dealt with, legislation may clean up the US and EU timber and fish markets, but the illegal products will be harvested and diverted to other markets.

Furthermore, enforcing legislation against illegal timber and IUU fish is a complex issue, which usually starts with controlling the legal trade. The fish and timber trades need an improved analysis and understanding of the legality of the products entering trade in order to improve control the flow of illegal product. Providing guidance to the corporate sector and tracing the legal product, as well as improving cooperation and enforcement efforts among responsible market regulators, are measures of the utmost importance.

Despite the challenges that remain, the first steps on collaborating to control the legal trade have been agreed on for fish and are a welcome move toward closing markets to illegal products. Similar collaboration between the U.S. and the EU on the timber trade would be timely, especially as there is already legislation in place on both sides of the Atlantic to combat the entry of illegal timber products into their markets.

Contribution by Ulrich Malessa and Benjamin Freitas, TRAFFIC North America

U.S. and EU Join Forces to Combat IUU Fishing

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing is one of the principal impediments to sustainable fisheries management around the world. IUU fishing accounts for about 20% of global catch and over 30% of catch in some regions.^[1] With an estimated global value of US\$10 billion to US\$23.5 billion per year (representing between 11 and 26 million MT)^[2], IUU fishing has a significant and negative impact on both ecosystems and livelihoods.

On September 7, 2011, the United States and the European Union signed a Joint Statement to Combat IUU Fishing, pledging to clamp down on IUU fishing and to prevent illegal seafood from entering the stream of commerce. The U.S. and the EU provide huge markets for seafood, together commanding 55% of global seafood imports. If pursued appropriately, the Joint Statement could have major impacts for fisheries sustainability, food security and domestic jobs.

The U.S. and the E.U. have already put in place regulatory measures to combat IUU fishing. For example, the U.S.'s High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium Protection Act provides tools for the U.S. to identify nations engaged in IUU fishing and take subsequent action. The E.U.'s IUU Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 blocks seafood importation without required certification. While important, such individual actions by the U.S. or the E.U. will not be enough to address the global IUU problem without sufficient coordination. Major seafood importing nations must work together to improve global fisheries management systems and to send clear and consistent signals that IUU harvested fish will not find a place in the global marketplace.

As part of their commitment to combat IUU fishing, the U.S. and the EU have agreed

- to work together to support the adoption of effective management measures in regional and international organizations—measures such as strengthened monitoring, control, and enforcement mechanisms in regional fisheries management organizations, and development of multilateral catch documentation and certification requirements
- to promote tools that prevent IUU operators from benefiting economically from their illegal activities
- to exchange information on IUU activities
- to encourage ratification and implementation of the FAO Port State Measures Agreement
- to promote the sustainable use of fisheries resources while preserving marine biodiversity

^[1] MRAG and Fisheries Ecosystems Restoration Research, Fisheries Center, University of British Columbia, "The Global Extent of Illegal Fishing," April 2008, p. 16

^[2] Agnew DJ, Pearce J, Pramod G, Peatman T, Watson R, et al. (2009) Estimating the Worldwide Extent of Illegal Fishing. PLoS ONE 4(2): e4570. Doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0004570

Contribution by Benjamin Freitas, Fellow, TRAFFIC North America

Downloadable versions of many of TRAFFIC North America's reports can be found at:
<http://www.worldwildlife.org/what/globalmarkets/wildlifetrade/item4912.html>, and
at <http://www.traffic.org/>.

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